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Monday, May 16, 2022

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Main bathroom shower pan

I cut the concrete for a stepless shower, and get the niches, lamps, & medicine cabinets delivered.



The main bath has this goofy sunken tub built into the concrete slab. I had to square off the corner by cutting into the floor a couple inches down. Then I looked long and hard at my CAD drawing, and realized that if the pan was three inches wider, then the studs and niches and shower heads would work out better. The real plus is that it will be easier to span the 3/4-inch gap around the long edge.

The raised tiled section is sitting on cinder blocks that make the deck of the tub. I did say it was goofy. With the wider cut I can bridge that gap with a piece of steel or cement board or something to give the pan some structure. While doing this, I got in a lot of items, the shower niches, the vanity lamps, the LED medicine cabinets, and the FlowFX drain, thanks to [the Tile Coach](#).



I ordered two diamond saw blades on Amazon,. This cheapo DeWalt 7-inch blade came in first.



Another interruption was [the roofers](#) came to replace the leaky skylight in the kitchen.



Before I could start cutting, the [Dawn 32x14-inch stainless steel shower niches](#) came.



They installed a Sun-Tek brand. It is clear, unlike the old faded skylight.



I got a pair of them on amazon. This will be a dual shower, so husband and wife have each.



The shower niches came in redundant Amazon boxes, I kept the Dawn boxes just in case.



Sure enough, the rains came a day later, and sure enough, Bill Shields roofing fixed the leak.



I had to chip off some thinset mortar. This was a waste, as I had to cut past this edge later.



The Flo-FX bonded shower drain showed up as well, thanks to tilecoach.com.



This 120-dollar rotary hammer worked better than a hammer and chisel, Amazon purchase.



OK time to start the job. I tape off the bathtub drain. I don't want it full of concrete chips.



The edging is removed around the tub. The right edge will be widened later.



I measured from the exterior wall to square off the recess. Later I used the [laser level](#).



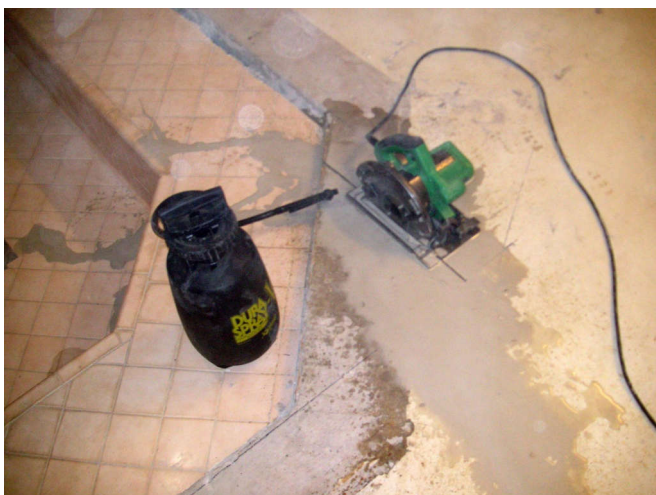
I periodically vacuumed up the water with my shop vac. The dust was minimal.



Cutting concrete dry makes too much dust. I used this broken garden sprayer to flood water.



I've got a horizontal cut and those four vertical cuts done.



The DeWalt blade did well in my Hitachi circular saw. Surface finish was great.



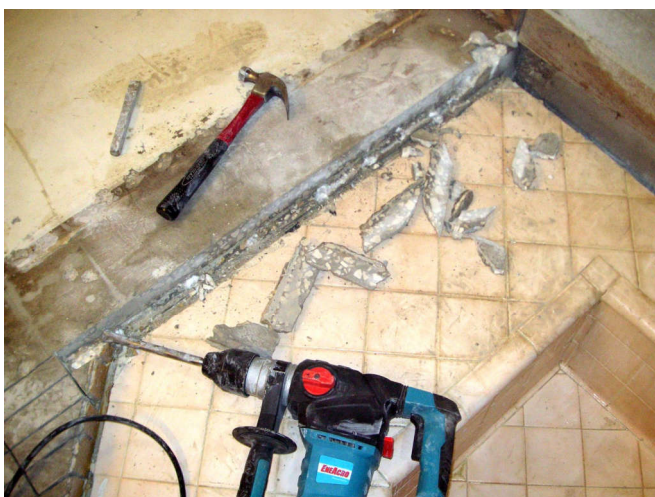
Then I used the short side of the saw deck as a guide, and cut the other way in tight blocks.



I used a 4-inch grinder with a diamond blade to undercut the blocks where I could reach them.



The water in the Rigid shop vac got dumped outside and cleaned with a hose.



The rotary hammer popped out the chunks easily. It went way better than I expected.



The chunks got put in the trash, a little at a time so as to not trip the weight alarm.



I cleaned up the edge where a partition wall will go, and now break out the rest.



The good Makita diamond saw blade came, and will be used to uncover the trap and drain.



The [\\$94 sconce](#) I will mount by the shower stall arrived. It matches the vanity lamps.



The [\\$750 LED medicine cabinets](#) came, packed like nitroglycerine. This is nice stuff.



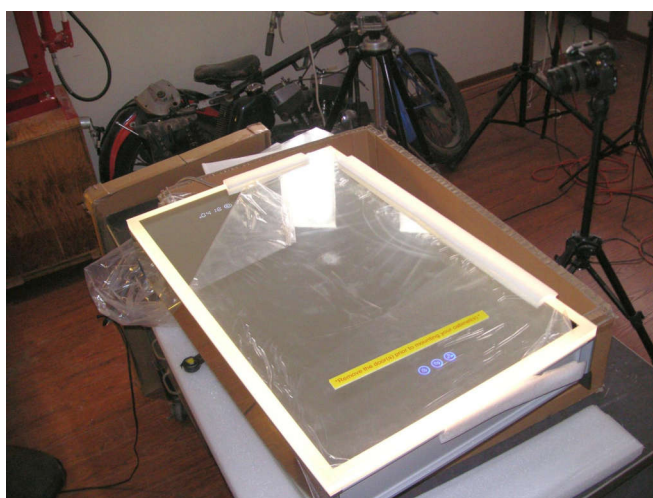
I bought two [\\$235 vanity lamps](#) to mount over each medicine cabinet and sink in [the vanity](#).



I open it up and no damage. I got a right-hinge and a left hinge to give symmetry to [the vanity](#).



I open the second one as well, to make sure nothing is broken. It might be months more.



I wired up the medicine cabinet to make sure everything worked, the light, defogger, & clock.



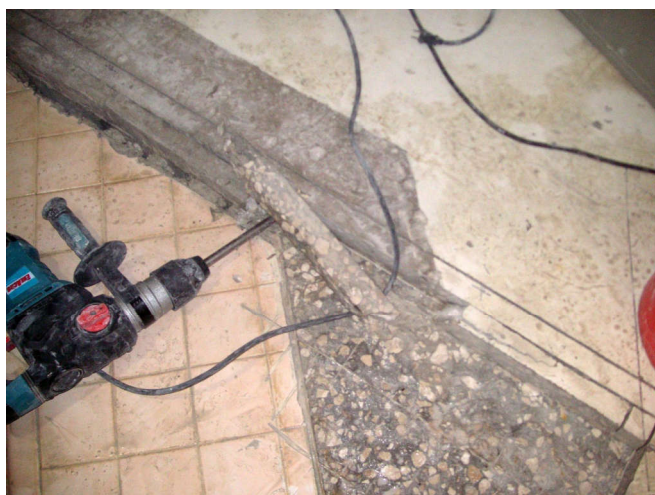
After putting the precise shower pan dimensions into CAD, I needed to widen it.



I run another cut, then use the 4-inch blade to undercut where I could.



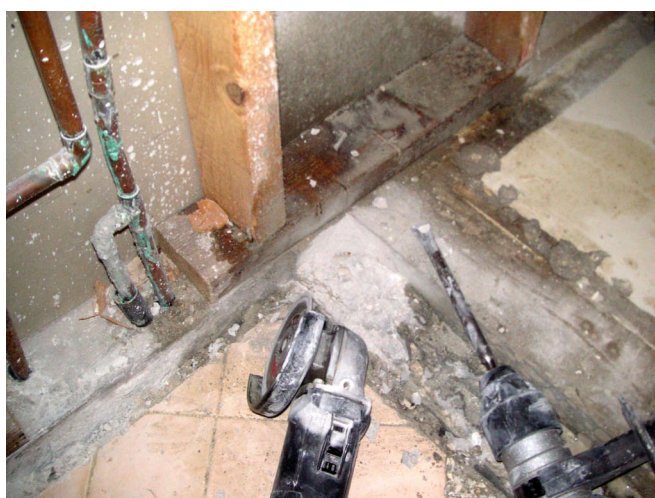
The laser is straighter than the exterior wall. I copy over it with red marker.



The rotary hammer makes quick work of this as well. The niches will fit the bigger pan better.



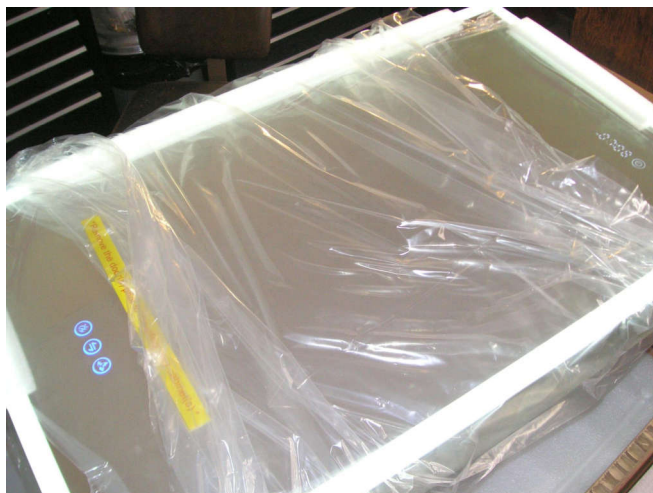
The Dewalt blade is getting dull, but I get the cut made pretty well.



This corner was harder, but with the 4-inch diamond blade and chisel, it got done.



After burning in the first medicine cabinet, I get the second one on the desk to check out.



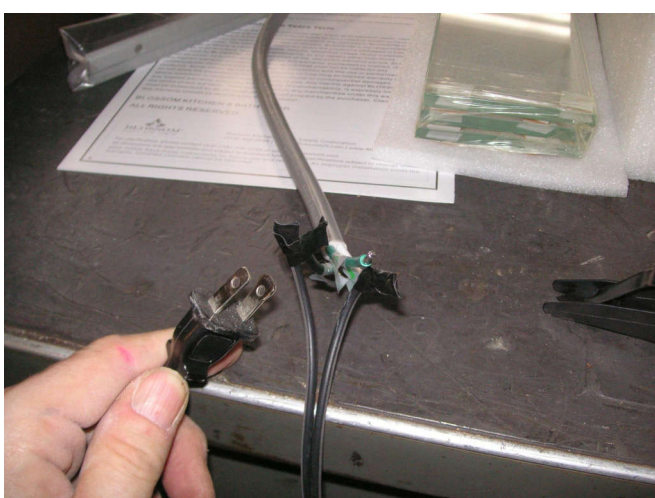
This one works fine as well. No damage and all the electronics works right.



It unpacks nicely and will be packed up again until it is ready to be installed.



It draws 34 watts with lights and defogger on.



First I hack in the electrical cord to test the functions.



It draws 13 Watts with just the LED lights. I think I had them at max brightness. The LEDs are bright, but still need a separate lamp above.



The medicine cabinet has 1 Watt of vampire power when it is in standby mode.

The bathroom design went through a lot of change while I waited for the pandemic to pass. I was going to put in a tub, but that would be a drain nightmare, needing added venting for the tub trap and the new shower trap. Then I realized I could build a dual shower and just use the existing trap with a longer drain.

I used to think a Wedi board shower pan would be cool. I was going to pay over \$1000 for a Primo 5' x 5' pan, next to that bathtub. After watching YouTube videos by the Tile Coach and others, I realized it would be stupid to use a foam pan, when a mud, aka mortar-bed, pan would be far easier to build, way cheaper, and much more suited to the un-level surface I have to build it on.

Similarity, I thought Wedi board panels would be cool for the walls. They are over 100 dollars each, compared to 22 bucks for 4x8 cement board. The cement board is stronger, and can support the heavy 2' x 4' tiles I plan to install. I figure to use moisture barrier membrane covered by Ardex 8+9 waterproofing. Belt and suspenders, if you will. With the shower pan defined, I can next build the partition wall around the toilet. Stay tuned.